Day 10.1.

**Morphology = study of word structure**

("morph" is a recent verb for taking one thing and changing its image to that of another, it's from a Greek word meaning 'shape'. So, morphology is about the shape of the words themselves.)

**Syntax = study of sentence structure**

("syn" as in "synthesis" and "synchronize" means something like "togetherness". So, syntax is about putting words together.)

**Semantics = study of meaning**

Structure and Meaning are Dependent

**PRINCIPLE of COMPOSITIONALITY:** The meaning of the whole is some combination of the meaning of its parts.

Example: The overexcited agitator yelled ominously.

Structure and Meaning are Independent

Example 1: 'Colourless Green Ideas Sleep Furiously'

Example 2: 'The rabbit the fence jumped'
Testing for morpho-syntactic category membership with structural (morphological/syntactic) tests:

Using knowledge of LINEAR ORDER:

1) Substitution: Devise sentences containing a word of known category membership, and replace them with a word of unknown category membership. If the unknown word consistently replaces the known word, it's of the same category.

2) Syntactic frames. Devise frames in which only words of a particular category can fit. If the unknown word fits in the frame, that is evidence that the word is of that category.

**Lexical/ Morpho-syntactic Categories**

('categorize' comes from Greek 'kata-agoreuein' which means 'to level an accusation against someone'. After lots of wear and tear, this ends up meaning 'to state that something is something'. So, categorization is about labeling something and treating it as such.)

The practice of teaching English grammar necessarily makes reference to the notion of 'lexical category', since such a notion is fundamental to understanding the relationship between words and sentence structures. The usual term for these categories is 'parts of speech'. The usual definitions of parts of speech are in terms of the semantic properties of the words. That is, the words are to be grouped into categories in terms of their meanings. The categories used in the study of morphology and syntax thus differ from parts of speech in terms of definition. The reason for this, as I will be noting over the next couple of weeks, is that structure (sentence structure and word structure) are independent of meaning. Hence, the categories we use in morphological and syntactic analyses must not be based on the meaning of words and roots, but rather on their structural properties, that is to say, on the application of rules to them.

Although I am saying here that the definition of parts of speech and lexical/ morpho-syntactic categories differ, I have a very strong suspicion that parts of speech and lexical/ morpho-syntactic categories are really the same thing. Thus, I expect that understanding the structural properties of these lexical/ morpho-syntactic categories is a good way to sharpen your understanding of parts of speech. Below are structural tests for some of the categories from English. Note that these tests are restricted to English, since they rely on rules of English grammar. Other languages may have the same categories, but the tests will differ.

Finally, a note on terms. For my part, I will use the terms 'parts of speech', 'lexical category', and 'morpho-syntactic category' interchangeably. The first, I take to be the traditional term for them. The second points out the fact that your lexicon (mental dictionary) must include membership in categories as part of your knowledge of the roots and derived words. And the third points out that morphological and syntactic rules refer to these categories to determine whether they will apply to a particular root or word. Since morphological and syntactic rules both refer to the same categories, structural tests for a word or root's category can be either morphological or syntactic.
Some Tests for category membership:

(c.f. discussion in File 6.4.1)

**Nouns:**

The 'plural' rule applies to them: 
______ + plural (‘cat’ -> ’cats’)

Can appear in between a determiner and a verb: 
Det ______ Verb (‘The cat goes ...’)

**Verbs:**

The 'tense' rules can apply to them 
______ + tense (‘walk’ -> ’walked’)

Can appear after a modal at the end of a sentence: 
Mod _____ . (‘I can walk.’)

Can appear as the first word in an imperative: 
_______ ....etc.....! (‘Walk!’)

There are several sub-classes of verbs which differ primarily in terms of what can and must appear to the right of the verb, classes such as transitive, intransitive, ditransitive, sentential, and linking (or copulative) verbs. We’ll talk about these later on. In addition, some of them are discussed in File 6.4.

**Adjectives:**

The 'comparative' and 'superlative' can apply: 
______ + comp. (‘fast’ -> ‘faster’, ‘fastest’)

(doesn't always work)

Can intervene a determiner and it's head noun: 
Det ______ N (‘The fast cat ...’)

There are several categories of adjectives that differ on their preferred position in the noun phrase. For example, numbers must be the first (after determiners, see below).

**Determiners:**

Always appear as the first item in a noun phrase:

so... 
______ Adj N (‘The fast cat ...’)

but not 
* Adj ______ N (‘Fast the cat ...’)

**Prepositions:**

Always precede a noun phrase: 
__________ NP (‘On the fast cat ...’)

Usually fit into the following frame: 
’right ______ NP’ (‘Right on the fast cat ...’)

Other categories that take more complicated tests:
**Modals:**

Modals are like verbs in that they act as the heads of verb phrases. BUT

Modals do not take the tense rule: * _______ + tense

(‘Today, I can go’ -> ‘Yesterday, I cannot go’)

Modals must have a verb somewhere close to the right:

this verb must not have tense either _______ V

(‘I can walk’ -> ‘I can walked.’)

Modals can be followed by *not*: _______ not V

(‘I can not walk.’)

**Auxiliaries:**

Auxes are like modals except:

Auxes do take tense: _______ +tense (‘I had walked.’)

Auxes must have a verb somewhere close to the right:

this verb must have some tense marker: _______ V + tense

Auxes (like modals) can be followed by *not*: _______ not V + tense

(‘I had not walked.’)

**Conjunctions:**

Conjunctions intervene items of the same category. More on this later.

**Pronouns:**

Pronouns can appear anywhere a noun phrase can appear. Thus a good frame for them would be:

Can intervene a verb and the beginning of a sentence: $ _______ V (‘They walk.’)

Cannot have an Adj preceding it in this circumstance: * Adj _______ V (not: ‘Big they walk.’)

**Adverbs:**

Adverb is a garbage category, which really is composed of several loosely analogous categories. Test and see for yourselves. Find a bunch of adverbs, and see if they can replace one another in grammatical English sentences.